

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. An image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used for image formation, a program for performing processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image-
10 forming apparatus comprising:

a format information acquisition part that acquires format information from an apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part, the format information including
15 information on a format of image data supportable by the connected apparatus;

a format determination part that determines a transfer-time format of image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus based on the
20 acquired format information; and

an image data conversion part that performs format conversion of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus in accordance with the determined transfer-time format of the image data.

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2. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 1, further comprising an apparatus selection
part that selects one or more from a plurality of
apparatuses connected to the image-forming apparatus
5 via the communication part.

10 3. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 2, wherein said apparatus selection part
selects the one or more apparatuses based on an input
by an operator.

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4. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 2, wherein said apparatus selection part
20 selects the one or more apparatuses based on
information input to the image-forming apparatus.

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5. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 1, wherein said format information
acquisition part acquires the format information by
making a request to the connected apparatus for the
5 format information.

10 6. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 1, wherein said format information includes
at least one of: information indicating, format by
format, whether formats of image data are supportable
by the connected apparatus; information on a format
15 of image data convertible in the connected apparatus;
information on compression of the convertible format
of image data; and information as to whether the
formats of image data are convertible by hardware in
the connected apparatus.

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7. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
25 in claim 1, wherein said format information

acquisition part stores the acquired format
information based on a unit of the connected
apparatus.

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8. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 1, wherein said format determination part
10 determines a format of image data with the highest
compression rate from the acquired format information
as the transfer-time format of the image data to be
transferred to the connected apparatus.

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9. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 1, wherein said format information
20 acquisition part acquires the format information from
the connected apparatus at a time of activation of
the image-forming apparatus.

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10. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 9, further comprising an evaluation part
that evaluates the connected apparatus independently
based on the format information acquired therefrom.

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11. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
10 in claim 10, wherein a result of the evaluation by
said evaluation part is displayed to an operator.

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12. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 10, wherein a result of the evaluation by
said evaluation part is displayed on the image-
forming apparatus.

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13. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
25 in claim 9, further comprising an evaluation part

that evaluates each of apparatuses connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part independently based on the format information acquired therefrom.

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14. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
10 in claim 1, wherein said format determination part determines a reversible compression format from the acquired format information as the transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus.

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15. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
20 in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part acquires the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of transferring the image data thereto.

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16. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 15, wherein said format information
acquisition part acquires the format information from
the connected apparatus when an operator determines
5 that the image data is to be transferred.

10 17. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 15, further comprising an image quality
selection part that determines whether to transfer
the image data with high image quality to the
connected apparatus.

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18. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
20 in claim 17, wherein said format determination part
determines a reversible compression format from the
acquired format information as the transfer-time
format of the image data to be transferred to the
connected apparatus when said image quality selection
25 part determines that the image data is to be

transferred with high image quality to the connected apparatus.

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19. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, further comprising an image quality selection part that selects a level of image quality at which the image data is transferred to the connected apparatus.

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20. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said format determination part determines whether to transfer the image data with a single format when the image data is to be transferred to a plurality of apparatuses connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part.

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21. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 20, wherein said format determination part
transfers the image data to the connected apparatuses
with the image data remaining unconverted when the
5 image data is prevented from being transferred to the
connected apparatuses with the single format.

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22. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 1, wherein the apparatus is connected to the
image-forming apparatus through a network.

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23. An image-forming apparatus with a
hardware resource used for image formation, a program
20 for performing processing related to the image
formation, and a communication part, the image-
forming apparatus comprising:

a format information generation part that
generates format information including a format of
25 image data supportable by the image-forming

apparatus;

a format information supply part that
supplies the generated format information to an
apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus
5 via the communication part; and

an image data conversion part that converts
image data received from the connected apparatus in
accordance with a format of the received image data.

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24. The image-forming apparatus as claimed
in claim 23, wherein said format information includes
15 at least one of: information indicating, format by
format, whether formats of image data are supportable
by the image-forming apparatus; information on a
format of image data convertible in the image-forming
apparatus; information on compression of the
20 convertible format of image data; and information as
to whether the formats of image data are convertible
by hardware in the image-forming apparatus.

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25. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein the apparatus is connected to the image-forming apparatus through a network.

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26. An image data transfer method of an image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used
10 for image formation, a program for performing processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image data transfer method comprising the steps of:

(a) acquiring format information from an
15 apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part, the format information including information on a format of image data supportable by the connected apparatus;

(b) determining a transfer-time format of
20 image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus based on the acquired format information; and

(c) performing format conversion of the image data to be transferred to the connected
25 apparatus in accordance with the determined transfer-

time format of the image data.

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27. The image data transfer method as claimed in claim 26, wherein said step (a) acquires the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of activation of the image-forming

10 apparatus.

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28. The image data transfer method as claimed in claim 26, wherein said step (a) acquires the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of transferring the image data thereto.

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29. The image data transfer method as claimed in claim 26, wherein the apparatus is
25 connected to the image-forming apparatus through a

network.

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30. A method of transferring image data between first and second image-forming apparatuses connected via a network, the method comprising the steps of:

10 (a) the first image-forming apparatus generating format information including a format of image data supportable by the first image-forming apparatus;

(b) the second image-forming apparatus
15 acquiring the format information from the first image-forming apparatus via the network;

(c) the second image-forming apparatus determining a transfer-time format of image data to be transferred to the first image-forming apparatus
20 via the network based on the acquired format information; and

(d) the second image-forming apparatus performing format conversion of the image data to be transferred to the first image-forming apparatus via
25 the network in accordance with the determined

transfer-time format of the image data.